

Final Thoughts

When I signed up for this class, I did so as a way to honor my pediatrician, who had passed away from pediatric cancer over winter break. While I had hoped to be a part of a community that would understand what I had been feeling and to explore the topic of cancer more closely as a way to honor him, I had no way of knowing just how large the impact that this class would have on me.

First off, the amount of material I learned was extensive, from patient advocacy to medical ethics, and was so different from my other academic classes. Further, I was able to take a lot of what I learned from this class and use it to actually supplement the vast number of biology and chemistry classes I have taken. For example, I remember in my inorganic chemistry class we were going over different Pt reactions, and the Professor mentioned in passing how the compound on the board was actually cisplatin, a common chemotherapy drug. To know people who have probably used this drug or a similar drug made that lesson so much more meaningful to me. It made me truly internalize the impact of the information I am learning on people's lives.

However, besides the learning aspect of the course, I met so many amazing community members and people who I know will shape the doctor I will hopefully someday become. In very few settings do you actually get to talk to patients and learn what they think makes a good doctor (and a bad doctor) while at the same time meeting and listening to incredibly accomplished physician role-models. From this part of the course, I have become more aware that you could be the smartest doctor in the world, but to have humanity and kindness matters

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just as much to the people you are treating. In addition, I am hoping to stay in touch with many of the community members, and to continue learning about their stories and lives.

Overall, this class truly changed me as a person. No matter how crazy my day had been or what had been going on, the class helped remind me why I am doing what I am doing and made me reflect about what really matters. I think my pediatrician would have been proud.